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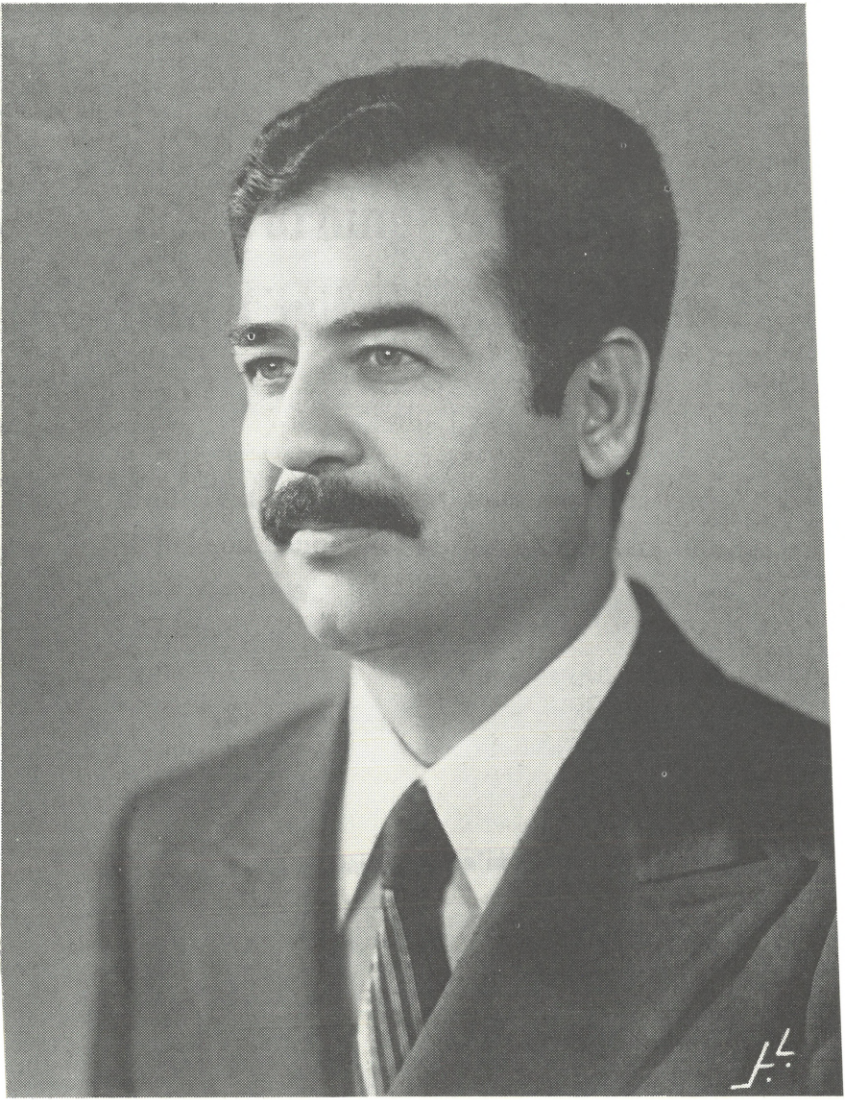
Turning Workers Into Civil Servants, Why?

Dar Al - Ma'mun



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Full Text of President Saddam Hussein's article on changing the title of workers into civil servants.

March 31, 1987

Dar Al - Ma'mun

Published by
Dar Al-Ma'mun for Translation and Publishing
Ministry of Information and Culture,
Baghdad - 1987
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Dar Al-Ma'mun for Translation and Publishing
P.O. Box 24015
Baghdad - Iraq.
Telex: 212984 MAMUN IK
Printed by Al-Hurriya Press, Baghdad

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Introduction

The present book is originally an article written by President Saddam Hussein stating the reason for changing the title of workers who are in government service into civil servants.

The article, which appeared in the Iraqi newspapers on March 31, 1987, bears witness to the President's desire to remove all traces of psychological and social differences between the workers and civil servants. The existence of these barriers has long been felt as detrimental to the country's social and economic development. To redress the balance the Government has made the move.

Why have we turned workers into civil servants enjoying equal rights and undertaking equal responsibilities?

What are the ideological and practical premises upon which this resolution is based?

On more than one occasion I talked about this subject at the meetings of the Party's Regional Command, the Revolution Command Council and the Cabinet.

Part of my statements at these meetings was published and the other part was not. The essence, the spirit and the ideological and practical grounds of this resolution might be clear enough to all Iraqis as they have received it with great appreciation. However, enquiries made by an

ambassador of a Socialist country about this resolution and his request for further explanation from a state department prompted me to sum up our concepts about this subject and matters related to it. Giving full details at one time and in a single article might not be possible.

The Arab Ba'th Socialist Party (ABSP) is not a class party, i.e., it is neither the party of one or two classes of society, nor the party of workers or farmers exclusively. It is the party of all social strata; in other words, it is the party of the whole people in terms of its short or long-term objectives, its internal organisational structure and its policies. In other words, the Ba'th Party is the party of the people in terms of intentions, aspirations, the policies of struggle

and their application.

In accordance with this principle, the Party started its action and based its outlook. Without this principle the Arab nation's process of revival and objectives cannot be realized. Although national revival was initiated by a minority who were the pioneers of the nation, such a revival cannot be realized in its comprehensive form if it fails to involve the whole Arab nation and all the people, and if the new spirit and its motives fail to reach all parts of the nation.

Accordingly, the Revolution in the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party's conception is not an end in itself. Neither has the party evolved to accomplish only this task, i.e., changing political systems which do not

realize the people's objectives or because the regimes are backward, treacherous or incapable of doing anything for certain reasons.

Our Party has not developed along traditional lines. Economically and socially, societies have been divided into classes exploiting each other. The Party is a normal off-shoot of the nation having as objectives the rebuilding of the nation in its social structure, economic capabilities, the distribution and development of resources and political system. The Party aims at enabling the Arab Nation to bring about happiness to its children in sound conditions and to express its national identity and human role in sound conditions and on a right course.

It is evident now that the nation needs

all its children for this process and not only one or two classes.

In reality, the full understanding of these principles, the faith in them and making sacrifices to realize them, are not limited to one class or another, as we have said. Those who accept these principles at times of struggle and accept the requirements of sacrifice to realize the principles must in one way or another be associated with those who feel the importance of such principles in their public and private life. namely, their personal family life, that is to say the importance of such principles to their life and future as citizens within the people and the nation.

Since the Ba'th Party's objectives and aims are something comprehensive. the

people who joined the Ba'th Party before the July Revolution of 1968 not only felt the economic aspects of life at the time but also sensed those rejected aspects in a comprehensive manner on the local and Arab levels.

This means that these people believe in this path of struggle more than others, whether in their insight through inference based on awareness and theoretical vision, or in the ability to interrelate negative social and economic aspects in society.

The structure of the Ba'th Party is not based on farmers or workers only, rather it contains sectors of society with sons of farmers and workers making the largest proportion. This is because their situation and the conditions of their fathers make

them more responsive than others to the Ba'th Party's objectives.

When our Party was introduced to farmers and workers it spread among them before the Revolution of 1968 in an unmatched manner. Before the 1968 Revolution, the farmers community was almost an exclusive field for the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party.

It is natural to say that while the Ba'th Party appreciates the situation of the social sections and oppressed classes and gives priority in its platform to changing this situation, it never forgets that its responsibility is much wider and more comprehensive. It is a responsibility for society as a whole including the responsibility of reforming those who misbehaved or deviated

from the right path. The Party of Arab revolution can never fall into the misconception that it is not responsible for reforming those who deviated from the right course.

Accordingly, correcting a deviation would not start from taking revenge on deviationists but rather by siding with the people and setting things right. This would be done by rectifying the conditions and stopping anything that allows wrong-doing to continue, by correcting deviation and changing those conditions which breed exploitation, oppression, humiliation and subservience by effecting a new situation where the mind and conscience blossom into a new manner and exercise their human and national role in healthy conditions.

In order to protect the people, and their course of progress the Revolution laws will be firm enough to stop anyone who persists in pursuing the path of deviation.

This makes it clear why our Party has neither encouraged class struggle nor made it an ideological platform, except to make the people concerned aware of the need to change this situation and replace it, not through unionist attempts isolated from the people, but through a comprehensive revolution to realize all the people's objectives.

Trade Unions in Iraq emerged as a reflection of their counterparts in other countries of the world and as a form of practical expression of solidarity among the members of the working class to relatively

improve their economic and social conditions under unjust political, legal, economic and social systems.

These unions performed their duties within this framework and within the wider interaction with national causes of the people, thanks to the awareness by the Ba'th Party members -who were in charge of certain union affairs or asked to direct unions along this line-of connections between the objectives and means on the one hand and the objectives of both workers and the people on the other.

On top of this comes the profound and comprehensive awareness of the reality of the people and the nation and their aspirations. The right way leading to a happy future lies in the fact that changing the

workers' situation cannot be realized without changing the situation of the people as a whole, although we do not rule out whatever slight improvement the unionist struggle could realize. That improvement was as achievement which had to be sought and never to be neglected, pending total victory.

The basis on which the people start building up their society should be one in terms of human value and the starting line, namely the start of the course of progress in the ideological, practical or scientific and other aspects. Without proceeding from the fact that the people should live free from differences apart from those dictated by the objective and practical criteria for our society the Revolution cannot build up the

society which we talked about nor can it realise the above-mentioned objectives.

No one can object to differences in the income of individuals in society. Those differences are based on academic achievement, work hazards, skill and outstanding performance by one person or another. However, it is a different case when differences are inherited from particular conditions prevalent before the Revolution. Among these differences is the existence of two designations namely, the civil servant and the workers with different psychological and social values and even with different incomes although they work together under the socialist system to realize a joint economic, social or cultural outcome.

Such a designation and the related

differences affected even the children of the worker through unprincipled and non-practical differences such as the marriage and children allowances paid to the worker which are less than those paid to the civil servant. ★

Such differences cannot be practically justified and it is natural to say that it cannot be justified on a matter of principle. There is no justification keeping such differences but being influenced by pre-Revolution conditions and their concepts of dividing society into classes.

It must be stated that such anomalous

★ *These differences were abolished by Revolution Command Council Resolution No. 652 of May 18, 1981 making workers and civil servants equal in this respect.*

cases had not been tackled, even in the Labour law promulgated after the 1968 Revolution, although this Law brought about to the workers a qualitative shift which cannot be compared with any other law in the Third World or in our country prior to the Revolution.

While the Labour Law contained such and an other defects which put the worker in a human and psychological position inferior to that of the civil servant, it tackled workers conditions on the basis of class differences and the complex of oppression between the employer and the worker without taking into account that the worker was protected by the Revolution and its laws and the majority of workers became part of the Socialist (Public) Sector and its

laws.

Such methods of treatment have seriously harmed production and the required cohesion and collective action to realize the common objective.

The legislator forgot or failed to consider that an important aspect of man's happiness, which we aspire to, can only be realized through putting all potentialities to use. This can ensure increasing production, improving quality and securing economic return on investment. Otherwise, somebody may say that capitalism is much better than socialism because it makes good economic return on investment, thereby allowing accumulation of wealth and increasing work opportunities, and improving work conditions from an economic standpoint.

As for socialism, there is less economic return on investment with a corresponding decline in the volume of wealth and work opportunities which leads to unemployment. At the same time, the government, under these circumstances will be unable to increase the workers' wages or improve their social conditions.

Therefore, to create a unified system of service that covers both workers and civil servants, ensures equal working hours and remove all contradictory psychological differences is a matter of paramount importance. When such a system comes into existence, it will undoubtedly have favourable effects on making national wealth and on increasing and improving production.

Instead of unifying civil servants and

workers under the designation of employees for example- i.e., to change civil servants into workers, depriving them of a favourable designation with which they have dealt for years and regarded it much better than a worker-status as laws and daily practice have shown-we have opted for the path that we usually take, namely to avoid taking away a gain from somebody to give it to others whenever we decide to give somebody a gain.

Therefore, all the Revolution's measures were aimed at putting things on their right course, not by withdrawing gains from some people but by giving such gains to those who lack them. These gains can be given after considering the Revolution's circumstances and resources.

Proceeding from the above and instead of sacrificing the designation of civil servants, we have decided to grant it to the workers and make them civil servants.

They are now standing on the same line of social appraisal and on the same starting line in terms of work and economic return.

Since the inception of the worker designation and his activities in Europe they have always been lined to work and physical effort. "Other" classes of people have been linked with administration and ideology and its related development and innovation. Now that technology and its use have been so developed that most of the machines can only be operated under direct supervision of highly skilled persons and

even under specialised manual and intellectual skills, there emerged another factor closely connected to work and its consequences in addition to the aforesaid factors related to the new legislation, under which workers have become civil servants in the state, enjoying equal rights and duties.

The present legislation makes easy the job of anyone with academic qualifications, whatever his degree, to work together with another colleague who may be charged with manual work and or manual as well as intellectual job.

Some might ask why we have delayed these measures for 18 years, that is since 1968 July Revolution. To provide a clear background to the answer on both theoretical and practical planes, it is necessary to

remember that it is much easier to overthrow an unwanted regime than to build a new one on its ruins. This is not only because demolition is easier than building but also because the old regime with all its past legacy led to misconceptions and left indelible marks on the social, economic, political, cultural and legal aspects of life.

The legacy left to us - complex problems and deviationist misconceptions - was not confined to a few rulers or beneficiaries, opportunists and deviationists. Rather, some of the erroneous principles and policies penetrated the minds and behaviour of good men including even some revolutionaries. One may be surprised to hear that some revolutionaries were affected by the unacceptable concepts

and behaviour inherited from the past. Those revolutionaries are by nature citizens forming a living part in the pre-Revolution's social life. They are also members of families which may include a grandfather, a father and children.

When a son becomes a revolutionary, his grandfather and father and the whole members of the family must have taught him some of the concepts and behaviour they had been accustomed to in their social life and behaviour in general, which they themselves had inherited from the past. Such concepts might not be viewed as being contradictory with those of the Revolution. This is because the proper image of a revolutionary society, which is built on the ruins of overthrown regimes, is not always

present in the minds of good citizens who supported the underground activities and struggles which led to the Revolution as well as its later course. Moreover, these concepts may not be present in the minds of all revolutionaries, theoretically or practically.

These concepts, transmitted from an old society spread as they actually did in the early years after the Revolution.

A comprehensive outlook of the Revolution's society along with its desired constitutional, legal, social and cultural institutions is not supposed to be conceived before proceeding to build up a real revolutionary society, particularly in an experience such as that of the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party which was not based on any ready

model of government before 1968. Hence, the experimentation which started with the right conception then the practical step. Such a conception might be the outcome of a combination of certain factors and phenomena which we feel or the outcome inference from similar measures. Then, we sort out what is right and wrong before making new endeavours along the right path. Yet the general line of the Revolution's principles, the living conscience of revolutionaries and the theory of action based on our revolutionary principles served as a guideline to follow the right path with the least possible mistakes and sacrifices in such a great Revolution which has changed all aspects of life and made radical changes in man's life, time and

conditions.

It is not enough for us to take the right step in the light of a previous right conception. Our desire has always been to take a clearly understood and convincing step not only for revolutionaries in senior positions but also for most people. We may try to make the majority comprehend and believe in such steps after announcing and explaining them. In so doing, we are attaining a basic objective, which is at the same time, an effective means for changing the course of a society namely to widen the participation in responsible decision-making even when the initiative is made by one person in any stage of its evolution. Therefore, we do believe that the course of history, its existence and direction are not governed by one

factor alone or by one factor in life. It is rather the result of action and interaction of material and spiritual aspects, in general, regardless of the preponderant weight that this or that factor may have at a certain stage or in a given case.

In all these factors man plays an active role characterised by determination. It is not a passive role. However, man is not immune from negative or positive effects of material or spiritual factors, even when he himself is to create part of them through his imagination or actual work.

Thus, legislation, through which man can change part of life is not a case isolated from its conditions. It is the embodiment of a strong will within its conditions although it bypassed these conditions with the new

legislation or with the change it effected.

Therefore, it is not merely a framework or a perception of commitments and duties alone but also a social product in theory and practice. It is the outcome of reality while it serves as an active and regulator factor for some of its vital aspects.

For all these factors combined, it was high time that law of turning the Socialist (Public) Sector's workers into civil servants with equal rights and duties came now. It came into being in a normal, health revolutionary manner.

The insistence of the Revolution's leadership on putting these concepts into practice right now means that the Revolution and its leaders are still young enough to apply the concepts of the Revolution and its

great leader, the Arab Ba'th Socialist Party. Most Third World Revolutions more often resort to statements and information than to legislation and implementation, or, with the passage of time, they forget their first proclaimed principles because of their inability to apply them. Sometimes the course of life and the first statements of the revolution and its principles meet at no point.

As for the 1968 July Revolution and its principles, these are always present in different aspects of life as well as in the course of progress of our great people. This is because it has genuine principles and its leaders' faith in such principles is not emotional or circumstantial but comprehensive, firm and everlasting.

The contribution of the Revolution, now entering its 19th year is still continuing and has become deeper and more comprehensive than at its inception. This is due to the accumulation of expertise, responsibility and proper course of action.

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صدام حسين

لماذا حولنا العمال الى موظفين ؟

اصدار دار المأمون للترجمة والنشر
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بغداد ١٩٨٧

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